

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



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APPROVAL OF UNDP ASSISTANCE TO A PROJECT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH

Planning, Evaluation and Strengthening of Rural Works Programme (BGD/79/012)

Report of the Administrator*

Date of present approval:	November 1979
Starting date of project activities:	March 1980 (planned)
Planned Completion date:	March 1982
To be executed by:	International Labour Organisation (ILO)
Government implementing agency:	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives
Estimated cost of assistance planned under present approval:	\$386 000
Source of UNDP financing:	Indicative Planning Figure (IPF)

I. Background

1. About 77 per cent of the people of Bangladesh, the eighth most populous country of the world with about 80 million people in a span of 55,000 square miles, depend directly on agriculture. Low agricultural yields, high rates of endemic unemployment and under-employment, and inadequate institutional facilities at the grass roots level

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are some of the factors responsible for the country's high degree of income inequality and rural poverty. Pressure on the land is increasing with the rapid growth of population, and with it the number of marginal and landless farmers.

2. The Government's interest in generating greater employment opportunities for rural people, especially for the landless and the rural poor, is reflected in its Rural Works Programme, which for the last two decades has been instrumental in providing seasonal employment to such groups. At the same time, the inadequate capacity of the Programme in administration and in project selection and implementation has prevented it from achieving its original goals. The present project is designed to correct this situation through improved project selection criteria, planning techniques and project designs.

II. Objectives and activities

3. The immediate objectives of the project are to: (a) improve programme planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation procedures and methods for the Rural Works Programme; (b) produce standard engineering designs for a range of small- and possibly medium-scale projects; (c) improve the practical knowledge of the staff in using labour-intensive techniques to implement such projects; and (d) determine the training needs of the Rural Works Programme staff at various levels. The project will assess existing training facilities and organize training programmes, carry out a critical assessment of existing engineering designs for different types of projects, and prepare a set of standard project designs which permit greater use of local labour resources and materials.

III. Inputs

4. UNDP will provide, through the Executing Agency, for the services of two experts, consultants, UN Volunteers, and equipment.

5. The Government will provide office accommodation, supporting staff, and supplies and equipment directly to the project.

IV. Financial data

6. The expenditure components of the planned assistance are as follows:

	\$
Personnel	276 000
Subcontract	15 000
Training	24 000
Equipment	53 000
Miscellaneous	18 000
	386 000